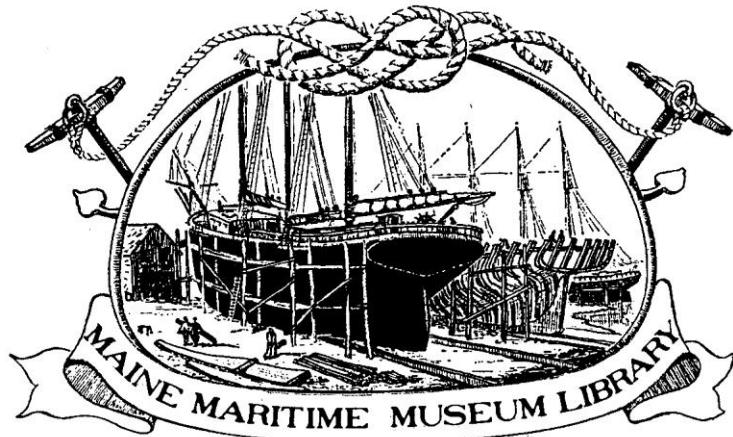


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**Inventory for
Manuscript Collection
MS - 83**

Goss & Sawyer Company Records

**1874-1901
Bulk: 1880-1884**

by
Elisabeth Meier
July 2019

2 boxes
0.8 linear feet
Accession no. 87.54

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Abstract

Goss & Sawyer (1866-1884)

Goss, Sawyer & Packard (1876-1884)

Records, 1874-1901

Bulk: 1880-1884

2 boxes

Shipyard in Bath, Maine.

This collection contains scattered correspondence, accounts, and vessel records from Goss & Sawyer and Goss, Sawyer & Packard, two related shipbuilding firms in Bath, Maine. Though fragmentary, documents span the firm's business, from timber purchases and shipbuilding contracts through operations of vessels managed, in part, by the firms. The collection includes specifications and other information on some of Goss & Sawyer's auxiliary steam-powered vessels. Some personal material from the Goss and Sawyer families is also here.

Museum purchase.

MS-083. Accession #87.54.

Finding aid (folder level control) in repository.

Added entries—persons:

Goss, Guy Carleton (1822-1890)

Sawyer, Benjamin

Sawyer, Elijah J. (1827-1906)

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

Goss & Sawyer

Goss, Sawyer & Packard

Added entries—key terms:

Lumber trade

Shipbuilding – Maine – Bath

Ships

Shipyards – Maine – Bath

Steam engines

Acquisition

These papers were purchased from Gerald R. Joseph in 1987. Joseph purchased them from Bruce Reeves of Thomaston, Maine. Accession documents note that Reeves' grandparents had owned the collection.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on this collection.

Physical Condition

The papers are mostly in good condition. Some display fire and/or water damage, and others are heavily creased or torn.

Related Materials

Some material from the New England Company, a later incarnation of Goss & Sawyer, is in MS-39. This includes detailed descriptions of the shipyard and stock on hand when Goss & Sawyer was transferred to the new company. Ledgers and journals from the Maine Navigation Company and the Goss Marine Iron Works are in MS-8 and MS-9, respectively.

There is material related to vessels built by Goss & Sawyer and Goss, Sawyer & Packard throughout Maine Maritime Museum's collection. Researchers would do well to search by individual vessel name. Some collections of note include MS-203 and MS-458, related to the *Benjamin F. Packard* (ship); MS-654, from Jacob Merriman, a captain of multiple Goss & Sawyer vessels; MS-655, from a tide mill supplying the shipyard with lumber; and MS-214 and MS-329, both related to the Packard family.

Historical Note

Goss & Sawyer was one of the most productive shipyards in Bath, Maine, in the late nineteenth century. It was founded in 1866 as a partnership between retired sea captain Guy C. Goss and master shipbuilder Elijah F. Sawyer. The pair purchased the old Johnson Rideout shipyard in Bath's north end in 1867 and, shortly thereafter, began vessel production on a large scale.

In 1873, master shipbuilder Benjamin F. Packard purchased the neighboring White shipyard and formed a new yard, in partnership with Guy C. Goss and Elijah Sawyer, under the name Goss, Sawyer & Packard. Although the two yards were separate entities, they worked so closely together that they awarded contracts sequential numbers from a shared list. By the 1880s, the combined yards had ten building ways, easily the largest shipyard in Bath.

Goss & Sawyer built most of their vessels on contract or speculation for out-of-state buyers, retaining a management interest in only a few. As a result, they produced a wide range of vessels to meet customers' requests, from ships for the Cape Horn trade to centerboard schooners, steamers, and the occasional barge or yacht. Goss & Sawyer also experimented with new technologies, most notably producing a line of auxiliary steam-powered vessels in the early 1880s. Guy C. Goss was also the leading force behind the Goss Marine Iron Works, established to produce marine engines in Bath, and an effort to build an iron schooner, the *James Boyce, Jr.*, in Alexandria, Virginia.

Goss & Sawyer went bankrupt in the shipping depression of 1883. Rather than let the shipyard sit idle, the partners, along with other leading businessmen, reorganized the firm, formally combined it with Goss, Sawyer & Packard and the Goss Marine Iron Works, and renamed it the New England Shipbuilding Company. Any vessels owned by the firm were divested to another corporation, the Maine Navigation Company. A major fire destroyed the yard, including the office, in 1888, and forced another reorganization as the New England Company; the New England Company continued producing vessels until 1906.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains correspondence, some accounts, and scattered vessel papers from the shipbuilding firms of Goss & Sawyer and Goss, Sawyer & Packard. The documents are far

from complete, likely due to a shipyard fire in 1888, but contain some information on both the construction and operation of vessels built by the two yards.

Series I, Company Papers, contains material related to general shipbuilding or the operations of the firm as a whole. This series contains most of the correspondence in the collection, including inquiries about new vessels, conversations with lumber companies, and instructions from Guy C. Goss when he was traveling on business. It also contains a few accounts, specifications for a marine engine, and ephemera related to the shipbuilding business.

Series II, Vessel Papers, contains information related to specific vessels built or managed by Goss & Sawyer. There may also be some information about specific vessels in Series I, especially if represented by early inquiries or hull number alone. Material here includes specifications and contracts, ownership and insurance documents, accounts, and correspondence. Not all vessels are represented by all types of documents; many are very fragmentary.

Series III, Personal Papers, contains personal material from the Goss and Sawyer families. The majority of this consists of deeds, accounts, and insurance documents from Elijah F. Sawyer's father, Benjamin Sawyer, for property in New Gloucester, Maine. There are also a few receipts from Guy C. Goss and Elijah F. Sawyer, and a document appointing William B. Taylor executor of the will of Edmund Hilton, a carpenter, of Bath.

Box and Folder List

Series I: Company Papers

Box Folder

- | | | |
|---|----|---------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 1 | Hull List, Goss & Sawyer Shipyard |
| | 2 | Correspondence, names starting with A and B |
| | 3 | Names starting with C, D, E, and F |
| | 4 | G, H, J, K |
| | 5 | Guy C. Goss, 1881-1883 |
| | 6 | Guy C. Goss, 1884 |
| | 7 | L, M |
| | 8 | Lewis & Littlefield |
| | 9 | N, P, R |
| | 10 | S, T, W, Y |
| | 11 | Unidentified correspondent |
| | 12 | Empty envelopes |
| | 13 | Empty envelopes |
| | 14 | Accounts, booklets |
| | 15 | Accounts, general |
| | 16 | Bank notes |
| | 17 | Taxes |
| 2 | 1 | Engines & boilers, marine |
| | 2 | Boiler inspections |
| | 3 | Miscellaneous notes |
| | 4 | Advertisements, outside firms |
| | 5 | News clippings |

Series II: Vessel Papers

2a: Vessels built by Goss & Sawyer or Goss, Sawyer & Packard

- | | | |
|---|----|-------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | 6 | <i>Ada A. Kennedy</i> (three-mast schooner) |
| | 7 | <i>Adam H. Simpson</i> (ship) |
| | 8 | <i>Alden Besse</i> (bark) |
| | 9 | <i>Belle of Bath</i> (ship) |
| | 10 | <i>Belle of Oregon</i> (bark) |
| | 11 | <i>Benjamin B. Church</i> (three-mast schooner) |
| | 12 | <i>Charles F. Sampson</i> (three-mast schooner) |
| | 13 | <i>City of Philadelphia</i> (ship) |
| | 14 | <i>Colin C. Baker</i> (three-mast schooner) |
| | 15 | <i>David Owen</i> (brig) |
| | 16 | <i>E.F. Sawyer</i> (ship) |
| | 17 | <i>Emma T. Crowell</i> (bark) |
| | 18 | <i>Fannie E. Wolston</i> (three-mast schooner) |
| | 19 | <i>Florence J. Allen</i> (three-mast schooner) |
| | 20 | <i>Forest Belle</i> (bark) |
| | 21 | <i>George S. Homer</i> (auxiliary bark) |
| | 22 | <i>Gerard C. Tobey</i> (bark) |
| | 23 | <i>Henry Messer</i> (three-mast schooner) |

- 24 *Henrietta J. Powell* (three-mast schooner)
25 *Henry Failing* (ship)
26 *Horatio* (three-mast schooner)
27 *J.D. Peters* (bark)
28 *Jacob E. Ridgeway* (ship)
29 *James Boyce, Jr.* (three-mast schooner)
30 *John R. Kelley* (ship)
31 *Jonathan Bourne* (bark)
32 *Leading Wind* (ship)
33 *Leander V. Beebe* (three-mast schooner)
34 *Lorenzo D. Baker* (auxiliary three-mast schooner)
35 *Maggie J. Smith* (auxiliary three-mast schooner)
36 *Martha P. Tucker* (bark)
37 *Mendota* (bark)
38 *Mendoza* (auxiliary bark)
39 *Minnie Smith* (three-mast schooner)
40 *Moses Webster* (three-mast schooner)
41 *Quaker City* (three-mast schooner)
42 *Tacoma* (ship)
43 *Warren B. Potter* (three-mast schooner)
44 *Western Belle* (bark)
45 *William H. Besse* (bark)
46 *William H. Smith* (ship)
47 *Xenia* (bark)
48 *Zaccheus Sherman* (three-mast schooner)

2b: Vessels managed by Goss & Sawyer

- 49 *Europa* (bark)
50 *Evie Reed* (bark)

Series III: Personal Papers

- 2 51 Guy C. Goss
52 Benjamin Sawyer
53 Elijah Sawyer
54 Edmund Hilton